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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 02/02/10

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ARTICLES:

- (1) Okinawan officials react strongly to FM Okada's remark on Futenma remaining where it is if no alternative relocation site can be found

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 29) (Excerpts)
February 2, 2010

"If no alternative site can be found, it is possible that Futenma

may remain where it is." Officials of Ginowan City and others opposed to Futenma's relocation within Okinawa have questioned this statement of Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada on the possibility of the Futenma Air Station remaining permanently, which contradicts Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's position that "(the Futenma base) will not remain where it is," criticizing him for being "backward-looking and incomprehensible." There is also criticism that a minister's statement that contradicts the Prime Minister's "is much more serious than disagreement within the cabinet."

Mayor Yoichi Iha (of Ginowan City) criticized Okada harshly: "Why did he say something like that? Since Prime Minister Hatoyama has said that Futenma will not remain where it is, such a backward-looking stance is incomprehensible." Iha pointed out that Okada's statements on Futenma relocation so far have often been received unfavorably among the Okinawan people. He voiced his objection, saying: "The Prime Minister's position is what counts, so if he wants to make statements, he should support the Prime Minister. He should be more careful with his words."

Naha City Mayor Takeshi Onaga, who co-chaired the "Okinawan people's rally against the construction of a new military base in Henoko and relocation within the prefecture" held last year, pointed out: "Disagreement within the cabinet refers to differences in opinion about details, but when a minister contradicts the Prime Minister's statement, that is much more serious than disagreement within the cabinet. This is unthinkable. What's wrong with the Hatoyama cabinet?"

(2) Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno also says continued use

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of Futenma base an option

SANKEI ONLINE (Full)
February 2, 2010

At a news conference on Feb. 2, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoriyoshi Matsuno said with regard to the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan City, Okinawa): "We are considering all options, including the continued use of the Futenma base, without setting any preconditions." He thus indicated that in case of failure to identify a relocation site, it is possible that the Futenma base will continue to be used.

Regarding the inspection of the candidate relocation sites by the government and the ruling parties' Okinawa base issues examination committee, which is looking into alternative relocation sites, Matsuno said: "No formal decision has been made. However, I think it would be good to visit various locations. If we do decide to make inspection tours, they should take place as soon as possible."

In connection with this question, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has denied the possibility of continuing to use the Futenma base, saying: "Basically, the Futenma base remaining in place is not an option," but Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada remarked at a news conference on Feb. 1: "If no alternative (relocation site) can be found, it is possible that Futenma may remain where it is." The Social Democratic Party and others have reacted strongly to this statement.

(3) Popular will in Nago - Washington taking wait-and-see attitude without making specific comments

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 2) (Full)
February 2, 2010

"A new element has surely been added now," Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell said in response to the announcement of the outcome of the Nago mayoral election on Jan. 25. All news agencies in Washington reported this remark.

But a U.S. government official emphasized: "Our negotiating partner is the Japanese government." Washington appears to be judging it would be better not to aggressively refer to how the current plan to

relocate the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station to Henoko could be affected by the election of Susumu Inamine, who is opposed to the existing plan.

In a regular press conference on Jan. 25, Assistant Secretary of State Philip Crowley said: "There is no change (in the U.S. government's policy). Prime Minister (Yukio) Hatoyama has officially stated he will make a decision by the end of May. Work is still under way." When asked, "Aren't you really worried about the outcome of the mayoral election?" he said: "That is a matter involving the Japanese people." When asked the same thing again, he simply said: "I have already replied to this question."

"It has become more difficult to make a prediction," a U.S. government source said upon receiving the first report of Inamine's victory.

On the day of the mayoral election on Jan. 25, Chief Cabinet

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Secretary Hirofumi Hirano said, "There is no reason why we have to take (the outcome of the election) into account." This remark was promptly reported to Washington.

A U.S. government source commented: "Japanese government officials probably are taking the view that there is no need to persuade the Nago mayor," but the source reportedly added: "Although the existing plan is still on the table, we should not be optimistic."

Prime Minister Hatoyama said: "The government will look for locations other than Henoko." Since then, U.S. officials have begun to use this expression: "We expect the prime minister will come up with an appropriate decision," while maintaining that the existing plan is the best and only feasible option."

Campbell, who is currently visiting Japan to attend a high-level meeting of the Security Subcommittee (SSC) composed of Japanese and U.S. senior foreign and defense officials, said yesterday: "I would like to hear views from ranking officials of the Japanese government on what effect the outcome of the Nago mayoral election will have on the procedures for conducting the environmental impact assessment."

U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense Wallace Gregson emphasized in an interview on Jan. 31 at the U.S. Consulate General's Official Residence in Okinawa, located in Ginowan City: "I think attention tends to be focused only on the Futenma issue, but the overall U.S. force realignment plan includes a variety of elements."

Delivering a speech at Waseda University on Jan. 29, U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos focused on the Marine Corps in Okinawa in explaining the significance of the presence of U.S. forces in Japan. According to informed sources, not only the State Department but even the Defense Department and the White House had approved the manuscript of the speech in advance. The Ambassador reiterated in the speech: "If the Marines are moved out of Japan, the mobility of the U.S. forces will be undermined." In this warning, the word "Okinawa" was not included.

Ambassador Roos stressed: "Our efforts will not end with the return of the Futenma airfield to Japan. We would like to continue to grapple with the noise and environmental issues and cooperate in promoting Okinawa's economic development." His willingness to implement the existing plan even while expanding the range of options could also be seen in this speech.

(4) Public prosecutors question Ozawa again: Tension and dismay in DPJ

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
February 2, 2010

It was learned that Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ozawa was questioned again by the special investigation squad of the Tokyo District over a case involving his political fund management organization. The revelation gave rise to tension and dismay in the government and the DPJ, with one member speculating,

"Public prosecutors are determined to settle the case promptly." With Ozawa, the most influential figure in the ruling parties, hinting at a possibility of considering stepping down as secretary general in the event that public prosecutors press criminal charges against him, a sense of crisis that this case could rock the foundation of the administration is spreading.

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Many DPJ members are alarmed by the fact that Ozawa was questioned again by public prosecutors, with a senior member saying: "The investigation into the possible involvement of Mr. Ozawa in the case is in its final stage. The possibility of their building a case against him seems to be getting stronger."

Ozawa on the afternoon of the 1st met with Muneo Suzuki, the head of the New Party Daichi, in the Diet building. According to Suzuki, Ozawa said that things will settle down in time and showed eagerness to work hard to prepare for the upcoming Upper House election this summer.

Ozawa's reference to his resignation has caused major repercussions in the party. Foreign Minister Okada on the Feb. 1 apparently said with a puzzled look, "It is not necessarily clear what sort of situation (that Ozawa was talking about) he would be held criminally responsible for. I would like to refrain from commenting at this point."

Many DPJ members are growing pessimistic, with one saying, "He should be reprimanded in some way, because he was questioned twice. Comparing with the time when he declared that he would fight against public prosecutors, his voice has now lost forcefulness and his face has lost its expression of resolve. He has been mentally driven into a corner. He has lost confidence."

In the meantime, others take the view that Ozawa has taken a precaution against the possibility of Tomohiro Ishikawa, a suspect (in the case of the false political fund report by Rikuzan-kai) being indicted and voices calling for Ozawa's resignation growing, making it clear that even if Ishikawa is indicted, he will not resign unless he himself is indicted or arrested.

Many are concerned about the possible impact of the scandal on the administration. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano stopped short of making any comment on Ozawa's statement. He simply said, "No comment." However, a government source was apparently concerned, noting, "If the question of whether or not Ozawa should resign comes under close scrutiny, the DPJ could split between the pro-Ozawa group and the anti-Ozawa group. If the secretary general actually steps down, the government and the ruling camp will lose their control tower. The management of the administration is bound to fall into chaos."

(5) Editorial: Japan-China joint study - Differences evident in historical views

YOMIURI (Page 3) (Full)
February 2, 2010

Each ethnic group or nation has its own views on history.

It would be extremely difficult for Japan to share the same historical views as China, in which the interpretation of history is carried out under communist ideology and academic freedom is restricted.

A report released by the Japan-China joint history research panel comprising academics from the two countries has revealed major differences in their views on history.

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The report covered ancient, medieval, and modern history and included the views of the Japanese and Chinese academics.

For instance, with regard to the number of people killed in the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, the Japanese side pointed out various estimates such as 40,000 and 20,000, with an upper limit of 200,000.

However, the Chinese side insisted that 300,000 people were killed, which is the Chinese Communist Party's official view. Based on empirical research, this figure is unrealistic.

In connection with the Sino-Japanese War, although the Japanese side pointed out that Japan did not plan an invasion, the Chinese side concluded that it was an all-out aggressive war.

The Chinese side referred to the possibility that the Marco Polo Bridge Incident may have occurred accidentally. This is probably the only sign of change in the Chinese side.

The postwar history section of the report, which attention was focused on, was not disclosed at the request of the Chinese side. This was because the Japanese side's assessment of the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident could lead to criticism of the present Chinese government.

In China, NHK overseas service, which reported on the joint study report, was suspended in the middle of the broadcast. Chinese authorities were apparently trying to prevent the footage of the Tiananmen Square incident from being broadcast.

In light of this situation in which the freedom of the press is restricted, there were probably limits to flexible discussions on history.

In 2006 then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Hu Jintao decided on the launch of the Japan-China joint history research panel. The aim was to leave discussion on the historical issue to academics, separate from the realm of politicians.

Unfortunately the academics failed to deepen the empirical discussions as hoped for due to the Chinese government's restrictions.

However, it can be said that it was meaningful to a certain extent that the academics representing the two countries discussed important issues and released the report.

It has been decided that the panel members will be shuffled and new members will continue to carry out the second round of study of history.

The fact that it is difficult for Japan and China to share the same views on history is understandable. In order to deepen the strategic reciprocal relationship between the two countries, Tokyo and Beijing will need to continue to hold calm and empirical discussions.

(6) Parents and children after divorce (Part 4): Parents should consider the emotional burden on the child before reaching a decision to divorce

YOMIURI (Page 19) (Full)
January 29, 2010

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Yoshiko Kosaka

Divorce has a tremendous impact on a child's mind. To what degree are the adults aware of that?

The parents of Ayumu Mitsumoto, 21, who runs a cram school in Shizuoka Prefecture, divorced when she was in junior high school. Mitsumoto vividly remembers the day she abruptly left the house with her father.

She was neither able to take part in the overnight school trip the following day nor say goodbye to her friends. "The divorce made me sad, but that made me even sadder," Mitsumoto said looking back on

those days. She has kept such a feeling deep inside her heart. "I knew that my parents could not think of such a thing."

A new life began with her father in a strange town, and she became not able to contact her mother. But when she was in high school, Mitsumoto abruptly heard from her mother. Mitsumoto, who was also worried about her future, got on a night bus to see her mother without telling her father. It was an eight-hour bus ride. "Our conversation was not exactly lively, but I was happy to see my mother. I had been tearful when I moved out of the house, but I was able to say goodbye to my mother with a smile."

Becoming acquainted with Asuna Shinkawa, 22, whose parents also divorced, Mitsumoto has begun conveying "children's true feelings" to the public via her blog this year.

Shinkawa is a director of "Wink," an NPO (in Tokyo) supporting mother-child families. Through her activities that involved contacts with many divorced parents, Shinkawa has become aware of the reality that children are at the mercy of the selfishness of the parents. She is now driven by an urge to let people know about the "feelings hidden deep inside the children's hearts."

Shinkawa met Mitsumoto when she was searching an Internet community site for someone to work with her. The two separately conduct interviews with children of broken homes to publish them on their blog.

There had been people with broken families among Mitsumoto's circle of acquaintances but she and they were always careful not to touch on their experiences. As she has begun talking about her experience after meeting Shinkawa, Mitsumoto has realized that she is now able to face up to her parents' divorce and that she is changing. She is also driven by a desire to convey children's real feelings to parents who do not know those feelings.

"Divorce hurts the child, and the child keeps the feeling of hurt to themselves without telling of the pain to their parents," explained Kobe Shinwa Women's University Prof. Kazuyo Tanase, who is also a clinical psychotherapist. "For the sake of the child, the relationship with one parent must not be severed completely."

Children who grew up with no contact with one parent tend to blame themselves, thinking they are responsible for their parents' divorce. "For the growth of the child," says Tanase, "it is significant to know what a parent who lives separately is like even if her or she is not a good parent."

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In Japan, a couple can get a divorce by just filing a divorce notice with the appropriate office without discussing the rearing of children. Tanase sounded a note of caution about the current situation: "Even if divorce is unavoidable, the parents must do so after fully discussing their children's future."

Annually some 240,000 children experience the divorce of their parents. The government is required to think what is best for children in a weak position and to review the current child custody system and child visitations. (This concludes the series.)

ROOS